

COMMON GROUND



JANUARY—FEBRUARY, 1951

VOLUME V—NUMBER 1

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Cover Photograph : A Medieval demonstration in favour of religious toleration. Rabbi Moses Arragel presents his Spanish translation of the Bible to his liege lord, Don Luis de Guzman, Grand Master of the Order of Calatrava. Knights of the Order, each wearing his cross, stand on either side. In the background the knights feed (*comer*), give drink (*beuer*), shoe (*calcar*), clothe (*vestir*), visit the sick (*visitar*), comfort (*consolar*), and bury (*entecar*) Jews.

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Religious Liberty

THE VERY REV. THE DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S.

An address delivered at the Annual General Meeting of the Council of Christians and Jews held on November 29th 1950.

IT is a tragic comment on the trend of the times that the Council of Christians and Jews, which was originally founded to combat in particular one form of religious intolerance and persecution, that, namely, in the Nazi state of Hitler, has found itself carried forward by the logic of its convictions to widen its scope and to deal with the whole question of religious intolerance and persecution. But I think we might take a slightly less depressing view of the subject if we remind ourselves that the idea of toleration is of comparatively recent growth, at any rate so far as Europe is concerned. It is only in the last three centuries or so that this idea that a man—an individual man—has an indefeasible right to worship God according to his conscience has become accepted by the civilised world.

Bases of intolerance

There are, I suppose, two rather different bases of intolerance which have been, and I think still are, potent. There is, first, the belief that it is the duty of those who are firmly convinced that they are in possession of Divine truth, to prohibit and stamp out the propagation of error as a danger to the welfare of the souls of the weaker and more easily misled brethren. That is what we might call the religious basis of intolerance. Then there is the other and equally important one historically, namely, the belief that the unity and coherence of a nation can only be based on an agreement in religious belief and conceptions.

It is, I think, wise that we should recognise that both these motives of intolerance have a certain amount of truth in them. Every religious man, I suppose, must admit that wrong ideas about God and God's relation

with man are dangerous and may be in the end quite disastrous. Therefore every religious man has the duty to propagate as far as he can the truth as he knows it and to confute error.

With regard to the second basis of intolerance it is, after all, the truth which was announced by a great prophet: "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" That applies to societies as well as to walking tours. It seems that unless common judgments of value, certain common assumptions about human rights and what is meant by the good life, are accepted, it is extremely difficult for a society to stand, and it is impossible for it to exist in a healthy state. An extreme condition of disagreement on values could disrupt society.

Arguments for freedom

The case against religious freedom is stronger than we sometimes realise. Nevertheless, I suppose, it is true to say that civilised men have concluded that the arguments for freedom outweigh those which can be alleged against it. Even the religious arguments for freedom outweigh the religious arguments for denial of freedom. Such arguments, I suppose, are that a coerced agreement is not an agreement at all and is in the end not only not worth having, but induces an amount of concealed malaise in a society which adopts such a policy.

Further, the argument that it is an inherent right of man as a rational being to follow his own conscience, even if that conscience be a mistaken one, is conceded. The dignity of the human person demands that his right to judge for himself should be respected and therefore the possibility must be left to him of making a wrong judgment. Among Christians, I think, it has been more and more accepted and acted upon that to attempt to spread Christ's religion by force is a betrayal of the Master whom we serve and it is only by persuasion that His Kingdom can be spread.

I believe that both these sources of intolerance—what I have called the religious and what I have called the political—are at work in the world today, and I should feel a certain amount of hypocrisy if I did not at least refer to the fact that there are countries in the world where one religion is predominant and where some feel that religious freedom for minorities is not as secure and not as widely spread as it ought to be. In this connection it gives me very great pleasure to quote a small paragraph in criticism of such religious policies of intolerance by a learned Jesuit, Dr. Max Pribilla, who writes: "It can bring only blessings on the Church, if she pledges herself to the freedom of conscience and willingly renounces the method of governmental coercion even where it is still at her disposition. What she in this way loses in physical power she will gain in moral strength. Her influence would be badly injured, and she would at the same time be fighting a losing battle, if every act of tolerance were to be



REFUGEES FROM INTOLERANCE

The expulsion of Jews from Vienna, 1670, from a contemporary engraving.

wrested from her as a reluctantly granted concession that might at any time be rescinded. Even in the case of the Church the ancient proverb is valid: 'Fata volentem ducunt, nolentem trahunt'."

Religion under communism

We are chiefly disturbed however, and I think rightly, about the cause of religious freedom behind the Iron Curtain, where religious intolerance is in the main politically inspired. I find it very difficult to say anything at all definite on the state of religion and the freedom of religion behind the Iron Curtain, owing to the lack of free intercourse between individuals. We do not know—and this is a terrible thing—whether the voices that we hear are free voices or are constrained. We do know that many pastors of Protestant churches have been deported or imprisoned. We know, too, that several have taken refuge in the Western world. We know very well that the Baltic States in particular have suffered a terrible deprivation of their religious facilities, and are still suffering. But we also know that some Christian communities appear to have reached a *modus vivendi* with the Communist governments.

We ought, I think, to be a little charitable in judging those who have made the compromise—if that is the right way of expressing it—and have accepted a *modus vivendi*, for it is always possible to argue, and indeed truly, that the Christian Church can exist under any form of government or

constitution, and it is not always easy to draw the precise line between a situation which is judged tolerable and one against which it is a duty to protest with the utmost force.

On reading the constitution of the Communist countries we find that all of them accept as a fundamental principle the freedom of religion, and so far as verbal agreement goes there is no quarrel between ourselves and any of the Communist countries. But the real question is whether this freedom is a reality? Is not the principle of religious freedom in fact negated by the administration and by the powers which the constitution puts into the hands of administrators? That depends to some extent at least on what is meant by religious freedom.

So far, as I understand it, there is very little interference now with public worship in the churches. Nevertheless the second form of intolerance—the political—operates very severely. The Communist states are engaged upon the task of conditioning the minds of their subjects into a certain pattern which is in accordance with their Marxist principles. In order to do that two important measures have to be taken. The first is the cutting off as far as possible of all communications with the outer world so that ideas may not infiltrate from outside. The second is the suppression of criticism so that new and contrary ideas may not well up from the spirit of man inside. In both these respects the Church, and religion generally, are fettered in the interests of the totalitarian State.

There is a very interesting regulation which I think appears in all these constitutions that any reference to the State or the Government in religious services must first of all be referred to the appropriate Minister for approval. Moreover all education is in the hands of the State, including education in theological colleges, at any rate to the extent that the syllabus and the instruction given in such colleges must have the approval and consent of the Minister concerned. Further there can be no communication with fellow Christians in other lands without the permission of the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

When one sees that these things are laid down in the constitution one begins to understand why it is that men whom one knew as friends during the war when they were in this country and were working for their own countries' freedom, are now silent. We do not hear from them, we do not know what their inner thoughts may be. How should we? They cannot communicate or visit outside their countries without the consent and approval of the appropriate Minister.

It is indeed difficult to resist the conclusion that the whole purpose is to make the Church completely subservient to the State and if possible

to use it as a potent instrument in the tireless propaganda of the State machine.

The call to repent

There is one freedom of the Church which is of absolutely vital importance. It is the one which Jeremy Taylor called the freedom of prophesying. It is not only the business of religious teachers in the Church as such to worship God, to bring up children in the nurture and fear of the Lord, it is also the business of religion to rebuke, reprove, and exhort, to call even—yes, perhaps chiefly—upon the rulers to repent, and that possibility has been destroyed in those countries under religious repression. Is it conceivable that behind the Iron Curtain there could be any reproof from the pulpit addressed to the rulers of the State? Is it possible that there could be any denunciation of forced labour or the brutalities of the secret police? Can one imagine such a reproof being made in the name of the God of justice and of love? I can only say that a muzzled Church could never be a free Church.

But I think we may indeed rejoice that the original programme of the Marxists to destroy religion root and branch has failed. It is something on which we can justly exult that the churches in Russia and elsewhere are full of worshippers in spite of all that has been done to discourage them from attending. Religion has demonstrated its extinguishable vitality and we must pray that out of that victory—that victory over an attempt to destroy it root and branch—will grow full liberty to do all that religion demands, to teach, to prophesy, to apply the criticism of the spirit to the works of man, and to call upon even the politicians to repent.

Religious Liberty

THE VERY REV. THE CHIEF RABBI

An address delivered at the Annual General Meeting of the Council of Christians and Jews held on November 29th 1950.

DURING the years of the existence of the Council of Christians and Jews, we of the Jewish community have had occasion to bring to the Council's notice manifestations of antisemitism and other forms of prejudice affecting the status of the Jewish community and having a harmful influence on the country as a whole. We have received every sympathy, every encouragement, and appropriate action has been taken within the limits of the powers and possibilities of the Council.

But today we are concerned with a problem which affects all denominations in different parts of the world who are finding their paths

obstructed by enemies who are the enemies of true religion, and I should like to express the deepest sympathy of the Jewish community to representatives of other denominations who at this time are filled with anxiety and grief over the fate of their co-religionists in other parts of the world.

Parental rights

I should like to deal with that aspect of religious liberty which concerns the right of parents to give religious instruction to their children, and in this connection to draw attention to one or two considerations arising out of articles in the Declarations of Human Rights which have been issued by the United Nations Organisation and the Council of Europe.

Being a Rabbi, however, I will begin with a Midrashic interpretation of the Scriptural account of the evil reign of King Ahaz. He was responsible, so they suggest, for the closing of synagogues and schools, for, he argued, "if there are no kids there will be no shepherd, and if there is no shepherd the world cannot stand. Ahaz thought that if there were no little ones there would be no grown-ups; if no grown-ups, no disciples; if no disciples, no scholars; if no scholars, no elders; if no elders there would be no Torah; if no Torah, no synagogues and schools of study; if no synagogues and schools of study, the Holy One will not cause His presence to rest upon the world. What did he do? He arose and closed all the synagogues and schools so that there should be no education. The testimony was bound up and the instructions sealed to scholars."

Now, this simple and anachronistic comment embodies a typical historic pattern of Jewish experience—the denial to children of access to means of instruction in the ancestral faith by all kinds of cunning devices, crude kidnapping, violent separation of children from parents, damage to the dignity of childhood, all these being the calculated methods adopted sometimes—and I underline this—by the persecuting enemy within, and more often by the persecuting enemy without.

The direful purpose is inevitably destruction and collapse of the structural forms which embody a faith and ensure the possibility of its continuance. Those forms are the Family, the House of Prayer, and the House of study. The aim is to break up the unity and wholeness of family life, to control the centres for worship, or even, should they be allowed to remain open, to disallow religious instruction in the schools.

Among the many illustrations from the past I would only make mention of the attempt of Antiochus Epiphanes to repress by force, not unmingled with blandishments, the faith, practice, and teaching of Judaism. In its stead, principally for political and military reasons, he sought to impose a uniform, crude and abhorrent paganism.

Every year we of the Jewish faith celebrate the Festival of Dedication or "Lights" as it is simply called by Josephus, commemorating the resistance and martyrdom and heroism of the Maccabees and their small band of faithful followers who, loyal to the higher authority—to Divine authority—secured the religion of the Bible for subsequent generations of their people and, might I add, for mankind as a whole. The zeal of the Maccabees might well enkindle courage and hope in the minds of those who in these days sometimes turn with diminishing confidence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of United Nations or the more recent text of the Council of Europe's Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom.

Freedom to teach

In the documents to which I have already referred there are articles included which speak of the recognition of the right of "religious freedom to individuals and groups, the right to manifest religion or belief in worship,



NOT BY BREAD ALONE

Whether in the fellowship of the home, or, as in this picture, in a refugee camp, the spiritual as well as the physical needs of children must be provided for.

teaching, practices, and observances." It is the word "teaching" to which I want now to draw attention. For the purpose of appreciating the meaning and limits of religious liberty in connection with teaching I can do no better than refer to the reports and recommendations of the International Conference of Christians and Jews held at Oxford in 1946 when fundamental problems were discussed by men and women representing the leading Christian denominations and also the Jewish denominations. It was said on that occasion that the religious freedom of individuals and groups should be guaranteed by law to all alike within the limits of morality and public order, and so long as the exercise of such freedom was not harmful to either individuals or groups.

It was further stated that religious freedom should include at least freedom from compulsion to do what one's conscience forbade, freedom to worship according to conscience, freedom to preach, teach, educate, and persuade. It was further stated that freedom to teach included in particular freedom of parents to have their children brought up in their own faith. It meant equality under the law in such countries as granted State subventions to denominational schools. It was also stated that the interest of the children being paramount, action might have to be taken on the children's behalf by the community of which the parents are (or were) members or on behalf of orphan children, who should normally be restored to the community to which they originally belonged and which claimed them. Those words in brackets "or were" have their own tragic story to tell.

Among readers of *Common Ground* a defence of religious freedom in so far as it affects the instruction of our children will be readily accepted. We can only hope that it be also accepted on both sides of the Iron Curtain. According to the constitution of most countries, including those on the other side of the Curtain, the right to religious worship is allowed, but it is severely limited and under strict control and is only permitted as a result of State condescension. But if there are no children there will be no grown-ups, and if there are no grown-ups there will be no scholars, and if there are no scholars there will be no synagogues, no places of worship of any kind. We have to strive with all the power that in us lies—we who are banded together to serve the interests of faith because we believe that spiritual values are so essential for the equilibrium which we seek—we have to strive to do everything in our power to see that this aspect of religious liberty is fully maintained.

In this we can well make a start in those countries where we still have, thanks to the many factors, positive and negative toleration and liberty which permit us to exercise religious practice and in the name of religious liberty to teach religion.

A CALENDAR OF MAJOR HOLIDAYS AND HOLY DAYS IN 1951

Both Christians and Jews have their own religious calendar. The Jewish year, which begins with Rosh Hashanah (the first day of the month Tishri) is based on a lunar month. This requires the duplication of one month every second or third year, and consequently the date of Jewish festivals varies from year to year, according to the solar calendar, within a maximum range of one month. In the Jewish calendar the day begins and ends at sunset.

In the Christian year, which opens with the season of Advent, one major festival, Christmas, occurs on a fixed date. Easter is fixed in accordance with certain lunar reckonings, and other seasons of the year, e.g., Lent and Whitsuntide, are calculated from the date of Easter, which, it will be remembered, originally coincided with the Jewish Passover.

For Roman Catholics, attendance at Mass is obligatory on Holy Days of Obligation, which, besides those so indicated in this Calendar, include all Sundays.

January 1st (Monday)
NEW YEAR'S DAY

Feast of the Circumcision of Jesus Christ. Holy Day of Obligation for Roman Catholics. A Bank Holiday in Scotland.

January 6th (Saturday)
FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

The twelfth day after Christmas. Commemorates the visit of the three wise men to Jerusalem and the manifestation (*epiphany*) of Christ to the Gentiles. A Holy Day of Obligation for Roman Catholics.

February 6th (Tuesday)
SHROVE TUESDAY

("Pancake Tuesday"). Derives its name from an old Saxon word meaning to impose penance upon, and so to hear a confession or to pronounce absolution. It was customary for Christians to be "shriven" on Shrove Tuesday, ready for the penitential period of Lent.

February 7th (Wednesday)
ASH WEDNESDAY

The first day of LENT, a period of forty days before Easter, commemorating the period of Christ's temptation in the wilderness and observed by Christians as a season of fasting and abstinence.

March 11th (Sunday)
PASSION SUNDAY

The fifth Sunday of Lent and the first day of **PASSION WEEK** during which Christians commemorate the passion of Jesus Christ.

March 18th (Sunday)
PALM SUNDAY

Commemorates the triumphal entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem. The week which commences on this day is called **HOLY WEEK**.

March 19th (Monday)
ST. JOSEPH

In Scotland, a Holy Day of Obligation for Roman Catholics. (Because of the proximity of Easter, this year the observance of St. Joseph's Day is postponed to April 3rd).

March 22nd (Thursday)
MAUNDY THURSDAY

The word "Maundy" derives from the opening word of the antiphon in the Roman Catholic commemoration of the washing of his disciples' feet by Jesus Christ: *mandatum novum do vobis* (a new commandment I give unto you).

PURIM

(The Feast of Esther). The Book of Esther (the *Megillah*) is read in Synagogue.

March 23rd (Friday)
GOOD FRIDAY

The commemoration of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ. A Bank Holiday in Scotland.

March 25th (Sunday)
EASTER

A festival of rejoicing celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. March 25th is also (for Roman Catholics) the feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady by the Archangel Gabriel. (Because it coincides this year with Easter, observance of the feast of the Annunciation is postponed until April 2nd.)

March 26th (Monday)
EASTER MONDAY

A Bank Holiday in England.

April 21st (Saturday)
FIRST DAY OF PASSOVER

An eight day festival celebrating the exodus of the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt, during which unleavened bread (*Matzah*) is eaten. In accordance

April 28th (Saturday)
LAST DAY OF PASSOVER

May 3rd (Thursday)
ASCENSION DAY

May 7th (Monday)

May 13th (Sunday)
WHIT SUNDAY

May 14th (Monday)
WHIT MONDAY

June 10th (Sunday)
PENTECOST

June 29th (Friday)
SS. PETER AND PAUL

August 6th (Monday)

August 15th (Wednesday)
FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION

with the Jewish calendar Passover begins at sunset on the previous evening. During the Passover *Seder* service in the home, the story of the exodus is told.

Celebrating the Ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven on the fortieth day after his Resurrection. A Holy Day of Obligation for Roman Catholics.

The first Monday in May is a Bank Holiday in Scotland.

Commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles on the fiftieth day after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Originally coincided with the Jewish feast of Pentecost.

A Bank Holiday in England.

The Feast of Weeks (or *Shabuot*), occurs on the fiftieth day after Passover and was originally an agricultural feast celebrating the ingathering of the first fruits of the barley harvest. It came also to be associated with the giving of the divine law to Moses on Mount Sinai.

A Holy Day of Obligation for Roman Catholics. (For note on Saints' days, see November 1st, All Saints' Day).

The first Monday in August is a Bank Holiday in England and Scotland.

A number of days are dedicated to Our Lady, Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ, and are observed especially by the Roman Catholic Church. This day commemorates her assumption into heaven. A Holy Day of Obligation for Roman Catholics.

September 8th (Saturday)
BIRTHDAY OF OUR LADY

A feast observed by Roman Catholics (see note on August 15th above).

October 1st (Monday)
JEWISH NEW YEAR, 5712

(*Rosh Hashannah*). Inaugurates the Ten Penitential Days ending with the Day of Atonement. The New Year covers two days, from sunset on September 30th to sunset on October 2nd. The New Year with the Day of Atonement, are for all Jews the most solemn days of the year, and are together called the HIGH HOLY DAYS.

October 10th (Wednesday)
DAY OF ATONEMENT

(*Yom Kippur*). A day of complete fasting (from sunset the previous evening), spent wholly in prayer and meditation in the Synagogue.

October 15th (Monday)
FIRST DAY OF TABERNACLES

(*Succoth*). Originally an agricultural festival celebrating the completion of the harvest, it commemorates also the time when the children of Israel dwelt in booths in the wilderness on their journey from Egypt to the Promised Land.

October 22nd (Monday)
EIGHTH DAY OF TABERNACLES

(Day of Solemn Assembly). Marks the end of Tabernacles, and the conclusion of the season of High Festivals.

October 23rd (Tuesday)
REJOICING OF THE LAW

The Law (as the first five books of the Hebrew Bible are called) is divided into a cycle of 52 portions, one of which is read in the Synagogue every Sabbath. On this day the yearly cycle is completed and recommenced in a festival of great rejoicing.

October 28th (Sunday)
CHRIST THE KING

The last Sunday in October is observed by Roman Catholics as the feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King.

November 1st (Thursday)
ALL SAINTS' DAY

In the Christian calendar many days are specially dedicated to different Saints. All Saints' Day commemorates all the lesser Saints, as well as all the holy men and martyrs whose record has not survived ; i.e., all the faithful departed who are now in Heaven — "The Church Triumphant." A Holy Day of Obligation for Roman Catholics. The following day, November 2nd, is ALL SOULS' DAY, commemorating the souls in Purgatory—"The Church Suffering."

November 11th (Sunday)
REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

A day of National Remembrance for all those who gave their lives in the two World Wars.

December 2nd (Sunday)
FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Advent, the beginning of the Christian ecclesiastical year, is the period in which Christians prepare themselves for Christmas, by the recollection of the first coming of Jesus Christ and the anticipation of his second coming.

December 8th (Saturday)
THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

In Scotland, a Holy Day of Obligation for Roman Catholics. (For note on days dedicated to Our Lady, see August 15th, Feast of the Assumption).

December 24th (Monday)
FIRST DAY OF CHANNUCAH

An eight-day Jewish festival (The Festival of Lights) commemorating the restoration of the Temple by the Maccabees, and its re-dedication.

December 25th (Tuesday)
CHRISTMAS DAY

Commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ. A Bank Holiday in Scotland. A Holy Day of Obligation for Roman Catholics.

December 26th (Wednesday)
ST. STEPHEN'S DAY

(Boxing Day). Commemorating St. Stephen, the first martyr. A Bank Holiday in England.

"A Noble Campaign"

THUS the headline of a leading article in the *Western Mail* referred to a series of meetings and discussions recently held in Cardiff under the auspices of the Council of Christians and Jews—the first of the "Week-end Campaigns" already outlined in earlier issues of *Common Ground*.

The campaign opened on Friday evening, January 26th with a discussion on Religious Tolerance broadcast on the Welsh Regional Service of the B.B.C., a discussion in which the Dean of Llandaff, the Reverend Oswald Davies (a Congregational minister), Mr. A. C. F. Beales (one of the Roman Catholic members of the Council's Executive) and Mr. A. I. Polack participated under the Chairmanship of Mr. David Prosser, an active member of both the National and Cardiff Executive Committees of the Council of Christians and Jews. We hope to publish extracts from this discussion in our next issue.

There followed a Public Meeting on the Saturday evening with Sir Frederick Rees (Principal of University College of South Wales) and Professor J. A. Lauwerys as the principal speakers; services in local Churches conducted by the Council's General Secretary; a lively Forum discussion with a Youth Group; meetings with groups of teachers and ministers and clergy; consultations with representatives of the Welsh Council of Social Service and of workers in the dockland areas of Cardiff where there exists a considerable population of coloured peoples. The campaign ended with a meeting for university students addressed by the Rev. Leslie I. Edgar (Senior Minister of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue), the Rev. Ronald D. Rees (Secretary of the International Department of the British Council of Churches), and Mr. Norman St. John Stevas, a Roman Catholic Research Student from Oxford.

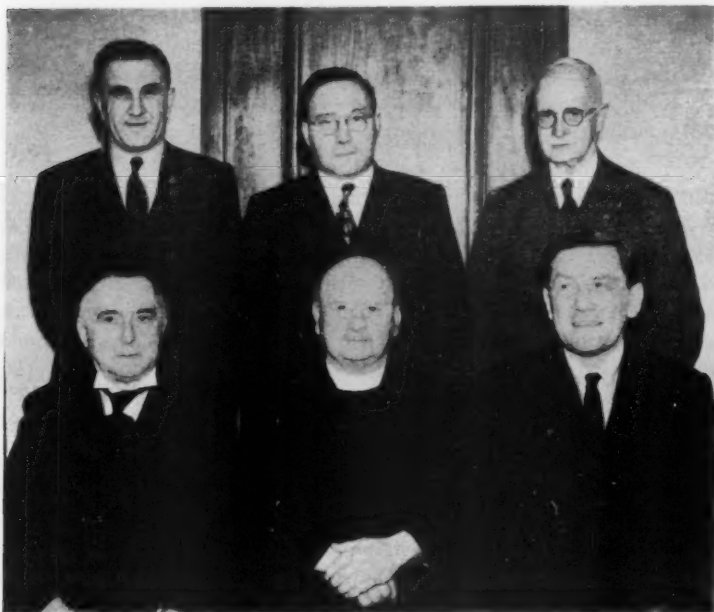
Reaction of teachers

We had hoped for larger attendances at some of the meetings, but we could hardly have had more stimulating or more revealing discussions. Particularly interesting, for example, was the reaction of a group of school teachers, all of them executive members of the Cardiff branch of the N.U.T., to whom Mr. Polack put a series of leading questions dealing with such matters as the relation between children of different racial, religious and social groups in Cardiff. An account of the way in which problems of relations between different colour groups in a school in the dockland area had been handled led at once to the comment that while that particular school was a "glaring example" of a group relations

problem in Cardiff, teachers must not allow themselves to be blinded to the less obvious but perhaps more insidious and therefore more dangerous forms of prejudice and lack of mutual understanding in other sections of the community.

Not that Cardiff is any worse in this respect than any other of our great cities. It is just that discussions of this kind tend to throw into relief situations and problems which all too often we gloss over perhaps because we sense that the task of dealing with them is likely to demand all we have to give of patience and creative imagination.

From the outset, these "campaigns" have been envisaged not as ends in themselves, but, in the words of the *Western Mail* leading article, "milestones on a long and weary journey." Their purpose is not "to iron out every racial, religious and political difference, and substitute for human nature's blessed variety some standard, utility man." It is rather to remove these barriers of prejudice and ignorance, the joint-



AT THE PUBLIC MEETING IN CARDIFF

(Left to right) Front : Sir Frederick Rees, Rev. A. H. Nicholas, Prof. J. A. Lauwerys ; Behind: Rev. W. W. Simpson, Rabbi L. G. Graf, Mr. John Fogarty.

begetters of that intolerance which threatens the very foundations of our Judeo-Christian civilisation. That is our "common cause."

We are grateful to our friends in Cardiff for their generous help and encouragement. We wish them well—and promise all the help the National Council can give—in the follow-up of a campaign which has provided us with some most useful experience and a great deal of information which will stand us in good stead, not only in Cardiff, but elsewhere.

Character with a Purpose

J. F. COLQUHOUN

In the Scout and Guide Movements youth of all races and religions meet in common fellowship, with mutual respect for differences of faith and outlook.

"A SCOUT is a friend to all and a brother to every other Scout no matter to what country, class, or creed the other may belong."

This law, the fourth of ten, is common to Scouts and Guides. What is its practical achievement? One way to measure it is to compare two camps forty years apart, the first at Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour, 1907 and the second, the World Jamboree at Moisson, France in 1947.

At Brownsea, Baden-Powell's idea of taking 20 boys of different social background to camp was very much of an experiment and he asked newspapers not to take notice of it. But if it was an experiment, it worked. The boys had the time of their lives together and the Scout Movement was formed. Exactly forty years after the camp closed the Moisson Jamboree began. By then the Scout and Guide Movements were so much accepted it caused little astonishment. But how many in 1907 could have visualised it—a city of tents with 30,000 boys from all over the world, of a great variety of race and religion, camping together happily?

In any case, a Jamboree in 1947, two years after a world war, was remarkable enough. Such was its spirit that when some German boys, not yet officially recognised as Scouts, arrived, there were French Scouts ready to smuggle them in to join in the fun.

Again, there were Indian and Pakistani Scouts of differing faiths living together. During the Jamboree their countries were partitioned amid race rioting—but at Moisson the flags of the two countries went up at a united ceremony, and they carried on together very happily.

Perhaps an even better example was at the American Jamboree at Valley Forge last year. A Bombay Scoutmaster wrote home that



AT THE INTERNATIONAL SCOUT RALLY, MOISSON, 1947.

Scouts of the Parsi, Irani, Muslim and Hindu faiths ate the same food in the same tents despite different dietary laws. "It would not be in accordance with the Scout idea for each of us to eat different food," he wrote. "However, if one of us was a vegetarian, all of us would abstain from meat."

Boys are naturally friendly

These are not isolated examples. Thousands of them could be quoted for they are the natural outcome of the Fourth Scout Law. The boy is by nature a friendly animal, largely free of adult suspicions and hatreds. If he is attracted into Scouting, at eight as a Wolf Cub or eleven as a Boy Scout, his natural friendliness becomes a rooted habit and governs his adult life.

For example at Kazi, Uganda, recently a Wood Badge Training Course for Scout Leaders was held. There were two Europeans, two Indians and 35 Africans who came from Uganda, Kenya, Sudan, and Tanganyika—and they all camped in mixed Patrols during the Course.

This is likely to happen on any Training Course or at any Scout International gathering.

As with Scouts, so with Guides who follow the same law. They can produce a multitude of examples of the same spirit.

Here then is a matter to which we would draw the urgent attention of the Council of Christians and Jews. There are in the world 4,860,000 Scouts and two and a half million Guides, all pledged to friendliness and to carrying out the objects for which the Council was formed. We feel that we can claim the support of all the Council's members. If all our boys and girls were Scouts and Guides, bitterness and racial strife would be wiped out in a generation.

25,000 leaders wanted

As things are, we could attract more boys and girls if we had more leaders. A recent Scout investigation showed, for example, that the Scout Movement was short of 25,000 leaders and no doubt the same applies to the Guide Movement.

So far we have been thinking only of boys and girls. But if one could number the men and women who have taken the Scout and Guide Promise since 1908, or if one knew all the subsequent occasions when their Scout or Guide training influenced their lives, an even stronger case could be made out. Through the B.-P. Guild of Old Scouts and the Trefoil Guild, great attempts are being made to band together many of those men and women who still regard the Scout and Guide Promises as the guiding principles of their lives.

Scouting and Guiding, because they are open to all who can take their respective Promises, because they respect differences of faith and outlook, have contrived to show how little different people are when they live simply, in the open air. Where there is laughter, the way is not hard. "The law of this camp is the Scout law."

Baden-Powell, who never wavered in this belief, remained unshaken when the world war came in 1939. Watching "Mount Kenya with his hoary old head standing foursquare as ever," he wrote to Scoutmasters all over the world:

"Don't let the technical outweigh the moral. Field efficiency, backwoodsmanship, camping, hiking, good turns, Jamboree comradeship are all means, not the end.

"The end is CHARACTER—character with a purpose. And that purpose, that the next generation be sane in an insane world."

The Muslim Attitude Towards Other Faiths

ISMAIL DE YORKE

The Council of Christians and Jews is concerned with combating all forms of religious and racial intolerance, and therefore with relations between people of all different faiths. This article, written by the Chairman of the Muslim Society in Great Britain, may help towards an understanding of the relations between Muslims and people of other religions. It is reproduced from "Forum," by kind permission of the World Congress of Faiths.

THE attitude of a true Muslim towards other faiths must be one of tolerance. In order that non-Muslims may be able to understand the significance of this statement, it will be necessary to outline very briefly the broad doctrine of Islam on the relationship between God and Mankind.

Allah, which is the Muslim name for the Almighty, created Man, with Adam and Eve as the first man and woman of the human family. As mankind developed into tribes and nations, God made His will known to His people through the intermediary of prophets who were sent to the various tribes and nations of the world. Many of these prophets are mentioned by name in the Muslim scripture, the Qur'an, and among these may be included Abraham, Moses and Jesus. Many, however, are not named, and among these it may be supposed are the founders of other great religions.

The exhortation of all these messengers of the Almighty was the same, namely, belief in the absolute Unity of God. Eventually, when the world was ready to receive the message of Allah amplified and consolidated in universal form so as to make it suitable for all mankind, the Prophet Muhammad received revelation and delivered the Almighty's final message to His people. Fundamentally, however, the message was still the same, emphasising the Unity of God, but to this was now added the idea of the unity of mankind. In this respect, the Qur'an, which is considered by Muslims to be the Word of God as revealed to Muhammad, says:

"O Mankind, We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that you might know each other. Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you, and God had full knowledge and is well acquainted"—(the Qur'an, 49: 13).

Mankind one brotherhood

From a study of the above quotation, it will be easy to understand that in the eyes of a Muslim, all mankind, having sprung from a single source and having received the same fundamental message, is really one

vast brotherhood. The differences between the teachings of other religions and those of Islam are accounted for by the fact that man, in his imperfection, had in the course of time brought about changes in these scriptures which were no longer in their original forms at the time the Qur'an was revealed. However, the Qur'an lays down the principle that no one, no matter whether Muslim, Christian or Jewish (and, of course, for that matter, of any other faith) has anything to fear from God, provided he or she believes in the Unity of God and in the Hereafter, and also does good in this world by being kind, forgiving, charitable, etc.

Bearing this in mind it will be possible to understand how the word "Muslim" can be applied to a member of any religion. The word "Islam" means "submission to the Will of God," and the word "Muslim" signifies "one who so submits." Thus, in the Qur'an it will be found that Abraham and others, even including the Disciples of Jesus, all of whom came in point of time before the Prophet Muhammad, were called Muslims, in the sense that they submitted to the Will of God. The word "Muslim" does, of course, mean in the more general sense, one who follows the religion of Islam as preached by the Prophet Muhammad, but in its broader sense it could be applied to any true servant of God. The word "Mohammedan" should not be used in referring to Muslims and is never used by them. The reason for this is that the Prophet is not considered as having taught anything new. The religion of Islam was not founded by him; all he did was to pass on God's final and consolidated message to mankind.

No distinctions of class, colour or race

It will be deduced from what has been written that Islam sweeps away distinctions of class, colour, and race. All men and women are equal in the eyes of God and can only be superior to one another in piety. A remarkable illustration of this attitude is provided by the occasion on which the Prophet, on hearing one of his followers address a servant as "Thou son of the black," said, "Beware! the son of the white is not superior to the son of the black unless in piety and good deeds."

Finally may be mentioned the speech which the Prophet delivered following his last pilgrimage before his death. In this he laid the foundations of the constitution which was to be followed by Muslims after him. He said: "O people, your God is One and your origin is one, for all of you belong to Adam, and Adam was created of dust. The most honourable among you is he who is the most pious. An Arab is not superior to a non-Arab, nor a non-Arab to an Arab, nor a white to a coloured man, nor a coloured to a white man unless through piety."

Thus it can be realised that the Muslim who submits to the Will of the Universal God can hold out his hand in brotherly affection to whoever else also submits to that Will. Indeed, it is not uncommon to hear Muslims when visiting non-Muslim lands, remark on the number of institutions, such as hospitals, charities, etc., which they describe as being within the Muslim spirit. This attitude makes it easy for Muslims to live side by side with non-Muslims in an atmosphere of harmony and peace.

Commentary

● Subjugating the Churches

Elsewhere in these pages we have reproduced the text of the speeches made at the Council's Annual General Meeting by the Dean of St. Paul's and the Chief Rabbi. These speeches were delivered against a background of facts relating to Communist policy with regard to the Churches sketched in vivid outline by the Countess of Listowel who, at very short notice, spoke in place of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster whose absence on account of health reasons was universally regretted.

Lady Listowel, herself of Hungarian origin, is clearly well informed regarding the position of the religious bodies in Central and Eastern Europe today. She is equally well informed as to the varying tactics employed by Communist inspired regimes vis-a-vis the Churches. Nor is she under any illusion as to their significance. At the present time, she pointed out, we are witnessing the early stages of a new form of attack on the Churches. "Despite everything done in Soviet Russia," she said, referring to the early days of the Revolution in that country, "despite the martyrism of Orthodox priests and pastors, the closing of the Churches, the persecution of the faithful, they did not succeed in liquidating religious feeling. . . . That is why the regime is now taking the line of using the Churches."

So it has come about that in the "Peoples' Democracy" today we find a government department whose special responsibility is to look after the Church affairs. The education of youth has been taken from the Churches. Social work has been increasingly taken out of the hands of religious organisations. Monasteries have been dissolved. In some countries "sham" priests have been sent among the faithful in an attempt to create confusion and misrepresentation.

There are, of course, many people, sincere Christians among them, who argue that this policy of using the Churches, or at least of bringing them under the direct control of the State, is not properly to be regarded as persecution. They urge that the alleged offences of which many religious leaders have been judged guilty are political, and not religious, in character. They claim, further, that in many cases the Church, or certain of the Church institutions, have been so closely identified with reactionary regimes as virtually to justify the present policy of the Communist regime.

The partial truth of certain of these contentions it would be difficult to deny. Even the most purely motivated religious opposition to a totalitarian regime becomes a political crime on the premises laid down by the regime itself, while there are few if any countries in which the institutional side of religious life is without some shortcomings. Moreover, there is a very real danger lest in some countries west of "the Curtain" the Churches should become so identified with the politics of anti-Communist regimes as to develop, from the religious point of view, into institutions of an eminently respectable but fundamentally irrelevant nature.

But when every allowance has been made for certain aspects of the anti-ecclesiastical policies of the Communist regimes two facts remain. First, that those regimes have been guilty of extremes of injustice and intolerance which nothing on earth can justify; and secondly, that there is a fundamental incompatibility between the ideology of Marxist or Leninist Communism and the theology either of the Christian Church or of the Jewish Synagogue.

In these circumstances Lady Listowel's concluding point is as important as it is inescapable. "If we want to defeat Communism," she said, "we must get rid of such dicta as: 'My religion has nothing to do with my business or my job.' It has much to do with it. Look at the Communists themselves, listen to their talk, their philosophy. See how they bring that philosophy into everything they do. So we must be equally thorough in our own witness if we are to help those who in the face of tremendous danger and great suffering are standing their ground in Eastern Europe."

● A problem and its roots

An instance of the way in which a potentially explosive situation caused by prejudice can be tactfully dealt with, comes from East London. Tenants on a Council estate who objected to four coloured men and a

white woman housekeeper being moved from a slum clearance area into one of the dwellings on their estate, started a rent strike. Here, apparently, was a concrete example of the "colour bar." Further investigation, however, revealed that beneath all the unpleasant and irrelevant talk about "niggers" and "slinking orientals" and the like, there lurked more real fears and grievances, many of which the strikers themselves did not fully understand.

First was the fear that this might be the "thin end of the wedge"—that this new estate, jealous of its reputation and respectability, would have to receive more coloured people moved from areas where lack of employment and poor housing made it difficult for them to be normal, useful citizens. Secondly, there was the real grievance that, when so many families still waited for flats, a group which could not technically be called a family—even though they did come from a slum clearance area and the authorities were therefore responsible for their rehousing—was moved into a family dwelling.

When these and other such under-surface causes of the rent strike were revealed by the patient work of the Council of Citizens of East London, they were taken to the appropriate authorities. Satisfactory answers were received, and were explained to the tenants. A categorical assurance was given that there was no intention whatever to set up coloured quarters in the rehousing programme. Coloured people would be mixed in with the rest and any concentrations found at present would be dispersed so as to help their absorption into local life. An assurance was given that the case over which the dispute arose was exceptional, and that groups of single men, whether coloured or white, would not normally be rehoused together in family dwellings.

The result was a happy one—once their real fears and grievances had been brought to light and seriously dealt with, the tenants expressed themselves willing that their new coloured neighbours should remain, and called off their protest. The issue of colour prejudice—which at first sight had seemed the main cause of the trouble—was thus resolved not by tackling it direct, but by dealing with the underlying factors involved.

● Comment in Australia

As readers of *Common Ground* will know, His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury has recently returned from his visit to Australia and New Zealand. Reports during and since his visit speak highly of the value of his tour, and of the deep impression which both the Archbishop and Mrs. Fisher made on people of all denominations.

Of particular interest to our readers will be the Archbishop's remarks at a press conference in Sydney in November. "Antisemitism," he said, "is the work of the devil, and we must hammer it like other outbreaks on racial or non-rational grounds." He recommended the formation of joint councils of Christians and Jews to fight antisemitism wherever it existed, and believed that if Christians and Jews worked together they could do a great deal to stamp out race hatred.

● Arab Refugees

The plight of the Arab refugees in the Near East grows steadily worse. The Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine, in his report to the General Assembly last October summed up the situation in a sentence when he said: "A condition which was expected to last a few months is now into its third year." What that means in human terms it is not difficult to imagine. Those who were able to take with them any of their savings have long since exhausted them. Clothing and the few household articles which many had at the outset are well beyond the period of their normal life and usage, and are well-nigh irreplaceable. Happily, as the result of the hardiness of many of the refugees themselves and the care of the voluntary and inter-governmental relief agencies, the incidence of epidemics has been reduced to a minimum, and the health of the refugees as a whole has stood up well to exceedingly difficult conditions. Morale, too, appears to be higher than might have been expected after more than two years in exile.

We may be thankful that things are not very much worse. But that is no justification for indifference, or for any slackening of activity on behalf of these unhappy people. The fact that there are still more than 800,000 Arab refugees (exact figures are exceedingly difficult to compute) constitutes not only a serious threat to the peace and stability of the Near East countries, but a challenge to the humanitarian instincts of the whole world.

But what is to be done? It now seems to be generally accepted by responsible students of this problem that to attempt repatriation on any large scale would be both unpractical and unwise. Resettlement and integration are the key-words of forward looking policies, and considerable progress has been made in the drawing up of works projects. Moreover the resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 2nd last without a dissentient vote and only six abstentions, encourages the hope that the U.N. is determined to do its utmost to solve this problem.

The resolution provides for a budget of \$50,000,000, of which two-fifths are to be allocated for direct relief work for the period from July 1st 1951, to June 30th 1952. The remainder is to be used to establish a re-integration fund for such projects for the permanent resettlement of refugees and their removal from relief as are requested by any Government in the Near East and approved by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. In principle this is admirable. But the budget has still to be subscribed, and the work to be carried into effect.

It is in this connection that the influence of a concerned and well-informed public opinion can and must be brought to bear. There are difficult problems of moral responsibility and of material compensation to be determined, but preoccupation with these must not be allowed to obscure the immediacy of the actual needs of the refugees themselves.

About Ourselves

● The most important event in our work since the last issue of *Common Ground* went to print was the week-end campaign in Cardiff from January 26th-30th. Under the heading "A Noble Campaign," a report of the week-end appears elsewhere in this issue of the magazine.

The second week-end will be held in Manchester from February 15th—20th. For this a full programme of meetings and discussions is already arranged, culminating in a dinner at the Reform Club on the Monday evening, with Lord Pakenham, Dr. J. J. Mallon, and Mr. Neville Laski as guest speakers.

● On January 30th our Hampstead branch held its Annual General Meeting under, be it admitted, very great difficulties. A three-line whip prevented both the Chairman (Mr. Anthony Greenwood, M.P.) and the guest speaker (Mr. Christopher Hollis, M.P.) from being present. A thick fog did not encourage members to turn out for the meeting. And a fuel cut left the hall icy cold.

Nevertheless there was quite a good attendance, and Mr. Michael Derrick, assistant editor of *The Tablet*, at very short notice undertook to address the

meeting. The secretaries' and treasurer's reports gave an encouraging picture of the useful work being done by the branch and of the support which it receives among residents in the borough.

● As many readers will know, there was an unexpected delay in the printing of Mr. A. I. Polack's pamphlet, *Tolerance—Can it be taught?* We are glad to announce that the pamphlet is now ready. It carries a foreword by Mr. Robert Birley, Headmaster of Eton College, and it should prove to be of real value to teachers and to all who are engaged in youth work. The price is 6d., or 7d. post free from the Council's office.

● We must apologise to readers for the late appearance of this issue of *Common Ground*, caused partly through illness and partly through the considerable extra work falling on our small headquarters staff in preparing for the Cardiff week-end campaign. We shall do our best to have subsequent issues of the magazine in readers' hands earlier during the two-monthly period covered by each number.

Book Notes

The Bible from Within

By A. G. Hebert, D.D.

(Oxford University Press. 8/6)

"Of making many books there is no end." Koheleth with all his wisdom could hardly have foreseen the truth of this aphorism as applied to books about his own work and the whole composite literature which we call the Bible. Yet the twentieth century has brought a spate of such books and, as the reader opens yet another, a doubt inevitably crosses his mind as to whether, on this subject, there is anything new to say.

That doubt has been convincingly dispelled by Dr. Hebert. Unlike so many modern critics he concerns himself, not with technical questions of archaeology or the sources from which the Biblical books were drawn, but with the story which they tell and the character of the message which they convey. These he simplifies for the average reader or teacher and in so doing reveals a single thread of thought or purpose running through the whole complex pattern of history, poetry and prophecy of which Scripture is formed.

There is perhaps, one section of the book which is open to some criticism in the light of modern scholarship. In his anxiety to show that the prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled in the person of Jesus the author writes of the Pharisees as though they were all hypocrites and guilty of spiritual pride. "Inwardly and in their secret hearts they were not godly men." This is true, no doubt, of a section of them, but the judgment takes no account of the genuine piety of the majority. "It was a living Judaism," wrote Travers Herford, "which gave birth to Christianity and its life was strongest in Pharisaism."

Nevertheless the plea for unity "in a spirit of faith and penitence" which forms the author's peroration more than compensates for this flaw. It is of special interest to *Common Ground* readers because it emphasises the common ancestry of Christians and Jews under the Old "Covenant." And it looks forward to a new sort of contact between them "when the

estrangement which has existed for nineteen centuries will pass away." On the terms of this new understanding there is room for disagreement; there can be no two minds about its desirability.

Our East London—The Story of Our Schools

The Fourth Bulletin issued by the Schools' Committee of the Council of Citizens of East London. Price: 6d.

Every fresh bulletin of this series confirms the view that we have here developing before us an educational venture of the first importance. Children who have these text-books placed in their hands or who are taught from them will learn that history is something more than a dull succession of facts or, as a recent truant from school described it in a juvenile court (Queen Mary herself being present) "all about stuffy kings and queens." They will perceive that it is a story of absorbing interest which has a direct bearing on their own lives and on their social relations with the people in their own street and neighbourhood.

The fourth bulletin (which is illustrated) has an additional interest as throwing light on the general history of education in this country. It is a co-operative venture and teachers from all the main religious denominations, Catholic, Protestant and Jewish have had a hand in it. This is an important factor since the demand for education did not originally come from the state but from the Church, the guilds, and certain religiously-minded private benefactors. It is significant that in the debate preceding the first Parliamentary grant towards education in 1833, Cobbett said that he "could not consent to take from the people one single farthing in the way of taxes, directly or indirectly, in order to teach the working class reading and writing."

We learn a good deal in these pages about the early difficulties with which teachers and pupils had to contend. It was a constant struggle against poor pay, inadequate buildings, inexpert teaching, etc. The Madras system founded early in the 19th century and lasting in one East London voluntary

school until 1904 put much of the education into the hands of older boys. Even in larger schools all classes were held in one room and it was claimed by this means "that a teacher could supervise up to 1,000 children!"

Finally, as we have come to expect in these bulletins, there is much information about inter-group, especially inter-denominational relations from the 16th century right up to the passing of the 1944 Education Act. We read that there was such jealousy between the two sections of the early Jewish community in London that when the school attached to the Great Synagogue (afterwards the famous Jews' Free School) was founded, the "Sephardi Jews, although they might be subscribers, were not allowed to vote in the elections for scholars;" and that the Catholic school (the second post-Reformation school of its kind) opened in Red Lion Street, Wapping, was completely destroyed by the Gordon Rioters in 1780. A happier incident recorded was the foundation of three Catholic schools in 1849 where the reporter for the *Tablet* of those days was surprised to see "so large a number of highly respectable Protestants at a Catholic dinner." Here is an early illustration of the growth of those good relations between hitherto hostile groups which these bulletins are doing so much to foster through the medium of factual and enlightened education.

Colour and Class in Six Liverpool Schools

By Leo Silberman & Betty Spice.

(The University Press of Liverpool, 5/-)

This is a story of an investigation carried out by two students of the Department of Social Science at the University of Liverpool. Their research was designed to discover the extent to which friendship and antipathy were related to "colour" and they selected six Liverpool schools with mixed population of white and coloured children for their study. The methods employed and the results of the sociometrical tests are clearly set out in a pamphlet of less than seventy pages in length.

The report is of intense interest to all those who are studying sociology

as well as to the wider public whose concern is in the promotion of happy group relations. They may be surprised to hear that, in these schools, discrimination, choice of friends, rejection, etc., are not on the basis of colour but "that children showed a marked bias against those of the inferior clothing group in their friendship choices." This is a hopeful conclusion since it shows that prejudice is not endemic in the human mind but a disease contracted as the result of the conditions in which we live. It should not, therefore, be beyond the wit of man to devise a cure.

The Magic People

By Arland Ussher.

(Gollancz, 10/6)

This book has something of the quality attributed by its author to its subject. Certainly it has the power, which in these days of ever-increasing distractions verges on the magical, of stimulating the reader's interest on the first page and holding it until the last. Not, of course, that all his readers will agree with everything that Mr. Ussher has to say about Jews. Why should they? On its author's own admission the view presented in the book is "an extremely personal one" which he himself does not expect "to meet with general acceptance." On the contrary, he expects what in fact he is very likely to receive, namely, criticism from both Jews and Christians.

Indeed so much of what Mr. Ussher has written is so stimulating and even provocative that it is difficult to resist the temptation to launch off here and now, if not into a page by page, at least into a chapter by chapter discussion of it ourselves. Resist, we must, however, if for no other reason than that there are very stringent limits on the space at our disposal. The most we dare attempt is to suggest a few of the points for which other readers may share the gratitude we feel.

Do you remember, for example, the fascination which so many of the Old Testament stories held for you as a child? You may well recapture something of this in Mr. Ussher's opening chapter on "The Book of Life," at the end of which he adds to Paley's dictum that the Old Testament is a history of people who were

"men in religion, children in everything else," his own conclusion that it is still "a book for children which can make men." And there is more in that than meets the eye!

His chapter on the Messiah is certain to provoke a lively reaction from many Christians as well as perhaps the majority of his Jewish readers, and yet again there is much that both would do well to ponder in the author's statement of his belief "that the long, tragic misunderstanding between the Jew and the Gentile can be ended on two conditions only—conditions not very likely to be fulfilled and only capable of being fulfilled in reciprocity: namely, that the Jews learn to accept the greatest of their sons—that the Christians consent to honour the race which produced the greatest child of mankind."

The stories of the conflict between the Church and the Synagogue (or between the Christian and the wandering Jew) and of the Evil Apocalypse (in which graphic phrase Mr. Ussher epitomises the tragedy of modern antisemitism) are told in a stimulatingly new way which leaves us, not in the privileged position of sitting in judgment over others, but in the much more disturbing state of having to examine our own hearts and minds, whether we are Christians or Jews. For, as Mr. Ussher puts it—and we shall do well to be on our guard against the too easy assumption that such a statement is merely an oversimplification—we must in the end "face the truth that all life lives on other life, and that humanity at its best is stricken with guilt. We all nailed Christ to the cross, we all built the Nazi suffocation-chambers, we all are Shylocks battenning on the misery of the poor. In that knowledge—the older wisdom of the East—Jew and Gentile can be reconciled."

And so to a conclusion, the pertinence and the urgency of which we are still all too reluctant to accept, that "if Europe does not master her antisemitism (which is, of course, only one, but the most malignant of the neuroses that possess her) she will assuredly perish—like all the civilisations that have persecuted Israel. To adapt a famous saying, 'celui qui mange le Juif en meurt.' It is not the least of history's lessons."

This is, indeed, a magic book!

A Year of Grace

By Victor Gollancz.

(Gollancz 10/6)

It is difficult to do justice to this anthology within the space of a short note. The author has set out to express through selected passages drawn from the whole of the world's literature an outlook which, though inarticulately shared by a great many people at the present day, is nevertheless peculiarly his own. He describes it as a mood and tells us that "it has been dominantly mine ever since, as a small boy, I snuffed the air and sang for joy amid the late autumn leaves in a narrow London garden."

This outlook can be broadly defined as Judeo-Christian in character. That is why the book will appeal so much to Christians and Jews and all those who share their belief in the essential righteousness of the divine economy and feel a sense of urgency in regard to the translation of eternal values into human terms. They will find their age-long hopes echoed in countless passages drawn from widely different sources. For joy (as well as misery) acquaints a man with strange bedfellows and it is startling to find how happily Torah and Gospel, Rabbi and Church Father, Spinoza and Shelley, Proust and Dostoevsky, to mention but a few seemingly incongruous pairs, sit together on the same successive pages.

Herein lies our main debt to the compiler. He has seen how much of the world's literature has a kinship in spirit. He has detected the link that binds the Hasidic story with his modern favourites, Berdyaev, Schweitzer and Tagore. And in so doing he has rendered an incomparable service to our time. It has become a commonplace to refer to this age as an age of materialism. This is only true in the very limited sense that certain non-theistic creeds are competing with the old traditional religions for a place in the sun. It is quite untrue if it suggests that we are morally bankrupt. The sinister feature of our age is, surely, a loss of nerve which has led man into the dangerous extremes of apathy and intolerance.

Mr. Gollancz is aware of this and in this fine anthology he administers a rebuke to our "atheisms and fears"—and this, not by preaching at us, but by emphasising in every line the

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Signed articles express the views of the contributors which are not necessarily those of the Council of Christians and Jews.

splendours of man's physical heritage and the unfathomable mystery of his experience. It is by this baring of himself and giving full expression to his own mood that he has helped to create the same mood in others and so banish the opposite "hell of terror and despair."

Communism and the Churches

By **J. B. Barron** and
H. M. Waddams,
(S.C.M. Press. 4/-)

This book is "an attempt to clarify the attitude of Communist Governments towards the Churches by quoting the words of Communists themselves, either expressed in public speeches or enshrined in their own official documents." It deals with the situation in the U.S.S.R. and the satellite states of Central and Eastern Europe (but not Poland, the Russian zone of Germany or China) down to the end of 1949.

The almost complete absence of editorial comment leaves the reader

free to form his own judgment and at the same time places upon him the responsibility of exercising careful judgment in the analysis and comparison, for example, of the various religious laws promulgated in different countries. At first sight some of these laws appear to grant complete freedom of conscience and religious observance. Closer examination, however, reveals that this freedom is carefully hedged around at many points, as for example in the case of the Bulgarian law concerning the Churches passed by the National Assembly on February 24th 1949, the first article of which guarantees "freedom of conscience and belief . . . to all citizens of the Peoples' Republic of Bulgaria," while Article 20 states, among other things, that "the education of children and young people and the establishment of youth organisations is under the special care of the State, and is outside the scope of activity of the Churches and their ministers."

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WILL NOT AFFECT YOUR THROAT



But we are in danger of doing what the editors of this exceedingly valuable piece of documentation have themselves been so careful to avoid. Suffice it then to say that they have produced a source-book which is indispensable to every student of this most important problem.

My Glorious Brothers

By Howard Fast.

(The Bodley Head, 9/6)

This book is written with a purpose. In his foreword the author writes: "Whatever is good in the telling, I owe to the people who march through these pages, those wonderful people of old who, out of their religion, their way of life, and their love for their land, forged that splendid maxim—that resistance to tyranny is the truest obedience to God." The people here referred to are the Jewish people at the time of the Maccabees and in particular that little group of stalwarts who, under the leadership of the family of Mattathias, took part in "the first modern struggle for freedom." The book is therefore a historical romance but the particular story is selected because it has a special relevance to the times in which we live.

It is told in an original fashion. Most of it is put into the mouth of one of the "persons of the drama," Simon, the last of the Maccabees. He recounts his experiences in emotional, turgid, melodramatic terms. Some of the pages are rather heavily bespattered with grime and blood. But the author has, by this means, succeeded in introducing a colourful, legendary atmosphere. We are back in the heroic age and seem at times almost to be reading a page of the Iliad, Hebrew, withal, taking the place of Hellene. Thus history is often discarded in favour of poetry and rhetoric.

This does not mean that the author departs from the truth. In one section, indeed, where a Roman envoy describes his impressions of the Jewish people, their strange beliefs and way of life, we get a truer and more penetrating picture than from many an arid historian. This is quite the best part of the book and if one of the author's

purposes is to explain the historical Jew to the Gentile of today, this brilliant survey, couched in the form of a report to the Roman Senate, will go a long way towards its accomplishment.

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